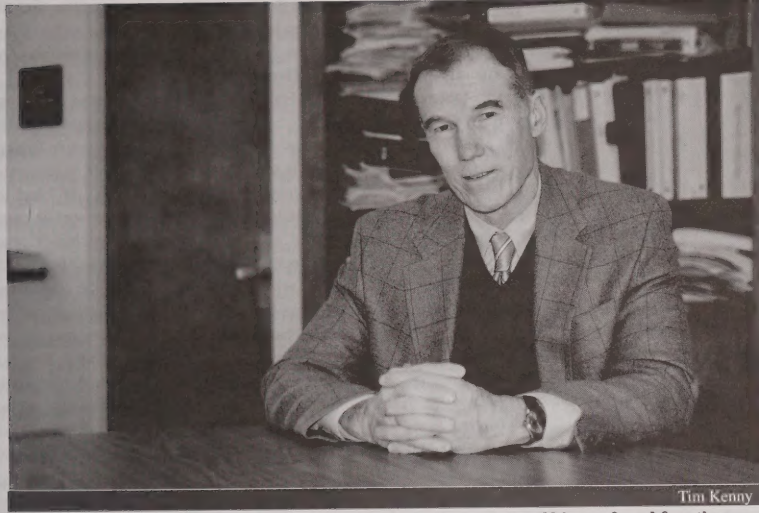


Principal Jones Announces Retirement



Tim Kenny

After retirement, Principal Michael Jones plans to make good use of his newfound free time.

Snowy Weather Causes School Cancellations

By Mark Fusunyan

Winter 2007-2008 has been one of the snowiest on record. Though Lexington public schools have only had a single snow day, the volatile weather has made transportation to, from and around campus difficult. Messy parking lots and icy walkways are a persistent point of contention among students, as manifest by an open letter to Dr. Jones on the free postering area.

Snow often creates dangerous road situations for the relatively inexperienced drivers who frequent our school. However, Dr. Ash stated that it is a "parental responsibility" to keep kids off the road in the case of inclement weather conditions.

Lexington High School's situation is made worse by its unique architectural design, the California-style campus. With open or non-existent walkways between buildings, students are forced to brave the elements. In addition, more labor is necessary to clear paths between buildings after overnight snow and ice events than for Lexington's elementary and middle schools.

However, Lexington's snow day policy is not affected at all by Lexington High School's architecture. Instead, Lexington's snow day policy is dictated, according Dr. Paul Ash, mostly by "information on road conditions from transportation staff and from Department of Public Works."

During every potential snow day, Dr. Ash consults with the Department of Public Works concerning their ability to plow all of "the most dangerous roads in the district" and "Category 1" sidewalks, which keep students off the busiest streets in Lexington.

Dr. Ash also consults other area superintendents, current and forecasted weather conditions, building conditions and parking lot conditions before making his decision, which comes before 5:15 AM.

Dr. Ash, like most New Englanders, places little stock in weather forecasts because of the notorious unpredictability of the weather. Lexington High School's Administration has little if any input into the snow day policy.

If schools are opened, Department of Public Works quickly clears surrounding roads and the parking lot. Lexington's custodians clear and sand all of the paths in the high school quad. In some situations, however, the weather has proved to be very difficult to manage.

During the December's ice storm, the sanding was largely ineffective to treat the freezing rain, creating a slippery experience for many high school students. Tal Aharon, a senior, retains strong memories from that day. "I think it's ridiculous that we have school when the entire town is covered with a thick sheet of ice..."

In the case of an intense impending

snowstorm, schools may even be closed early. In one instance this December, Ash utilized this option in granting early dismissal to Lexington Public Schools. The decision proved to be sound as the storm picked up in intensity as the forecast warned.

In still other cases, the Department of Public Works requires more time to effectively plow sidewalks and roads. In these cases, Dr. Ash imposes a delay to avoid "having to make up an extra day in June". Often times, delays occur after a moderate overnight snowfall or when it is predicted that warming temperatures will melt snow.

This sentiment was met with sharp opposition from some students. In his open letter to Dr. Jones, Senior Grant Patch wrote, "Safety is more important than cramming in another day of school into the week. If the school is not ready to handle an influx of students, the school should think about delaying or canceling school."

In general, and not to anyone's surprise, student opinion is very pro-snow day, especially on the part of seniors, who won't have to make up any snow days.

In mid-January, Senior Ethan Cecchetti took slight issue with Dr. Ash's discretion, stating, "I think he's being too conservative with snow days. We probably should have had at least one or two more before today."

By Rivka Barrett

On Friday, January 4th, 2008, Principal Michael Jones sent out a public announcement to parents and students at Lexington High School announcing that he would be retiring in June. He said he made this decision shortly before the December holiday break.

Jones began teaching as an English teacher at the University of Massachusetts in Boston in 1974. He later switched his focus to secondary education, where he has been an English teacher, English department head, and a principal for the past decade, first in Maynard, then in Cohasset before coming to Lexington.

During the mid-eighties, Jones was involved in environmental activism, and joined local citizens' action groups to battle illegal dumping of toxic waste. The groups circulated petitions, held press conferences, and tried to pressure government and businesses to clean up toxic waste sites. Jones said, "This was around the time of all the controversy in Love Canal and in Woburn with the cancer cases and the contaminated water, so it was a hot issue." After retiring, Jones hopes to pay more attention to children's issues, such as health care and education.

In his public announcement, Jones admitted, "If I were ten years younger, I'd love to stay for another ten years to continue in this role." At the same time, he expressed his eagerness to look ahead.

Once Jones resigns from his position as principal, he hopes to delve more deeply into his writing, a strong interest of his for many years. He has already written essays, monographs, and a scholarly book on Joseph Conrad. The book was titled "Conrad's Heroism," and was published in 1984 by the University of Michigan Press.

Jones says he will continue to live in his spacious loft condominium along the Merrimack River, at the

site of a former nineteenth-century textile mill, where he reports seeing beaver, bald eagles, blue heron, and breathtaking sunrises. He says, "I hope to stay there for a long time."

However, he still plans to seize the opportunity to travel – perhaps even visit his son, a graduate student in archaeology currently working in Istanbul. "Beyond that," Jones says, "I dream about Greece and Italy."

Jones also sees his retirement as a chance to "write a couple of more chapters" in his life. When asked to describe what those chapters are likely to be, Jones responds, "One chapter is called 'The Aging Beachcomber.' Another is 'The Seeker Finds the Way,' or 'Better Late Than Never.' A third is 'The Social Activist.' There's a last chapter too, but I don't know what to call it yet."

"If I were ten years younger I'd love to stay for another ten years to continue in this role."

-Dr. Jones on retiring

Anything more than that will require reincarnation."

Before he leaves Lexington High School, Jones has some goals left to

accomplish. "I'd like to see the substantial completion of our curriculum writing," he says.

In addition, Jones wants to promote more widespread use of performance-based rubrics in courses at Lexington High School. These rubrics would assess students' academic performance through the completion of projects, portfolios, or journals, rather than through the more traditional method of testing. Jones adds, "I wish I could be here to see the results of a more systematic academic support system for students who need a little more time and help."

Jones' fondest memories of LHS include his accomplishments in eliminating weighted grades, as well as "the cooperation among the administration, faculty, parents, and students in promoting safe and alcohol-free dances." In addition, he will miss the everyday life and traditions at LHS, including Pops Night, the fall musical, the senior graduation ceremonies, lunches on the senior quad, and "the sunsets over the Lincoln Street fields."

Winterfest.....pg 3

Too Politically Correct?.....pg 5

PostSecrets.....pg 2

Jazz Nite.....pg 3

NEWS/FEATURES

Students Share Secrets



Tim Kenny

The PostSecrets display holds an array of once-private thoughts.

By Mia Karnofsky

In mid-December, many students took notice of the colorful postcards that began to appear in the Collage of Voices display case that is located in the main hallway. Students clustered around the display, giggling at, sympathizing with, and admiring the compelling postcards submitted by other students anonymously.

LHS art teacher Annie Zeybekoglu and Lexington parent Karen Watson Holton, coordinator of the Collage of Voices display case, worked together to organize the PostSecret Community Display.

The project at LHS was inspired by the popular blog postsecret.com. Every week since January 2005, founder Frank Warren has posted the decorative postcards bearing secrets that he receives anonymously. Warren has published four books containing selections of these "post-secrets," and commented during an interview with CNN that "[PostSecret] allows people to remove their social masks."

"The project has a validating quality—everyone feels equally interesting," explained Watson Holton. She thinks that it's important to have "a visual place in the school for people to express themselves that is interactive."

Watson Holton hopes the project will help build a sense of community within the high school while creating dialogue between students, teachers, administrators, and parents. "[Reading the PostSecrets] makes you realize that some of your own secrets are shared by many others," admitted junior Emily Miller.

Zeybekoglu first brought the con-

cept of PostSecrets to the school when she asked her portfolio class to create artwork that conveyed a truth the students had never told anyone. Soon after, Zeybekoglu included the project in all of her classes.

Now, Watson Holton and Zeybekoglu invite the entire student body, the faculty, and even parents to contribute to the project by submitting their hopes, regrets, beliefs, fears, desires, or memories in the form of creative and expressive postcards. Though Zeybekoglu introduced it to the school as an art project, the emphasis of the current display is on the process of personal expression and on strengthening the community. PostSecrets range from impressive works of art to profound sentences written in pencil.

All postcards are subject to the discretion of Watson Holton and Zeybekoglu. The content of postcards must be in accordance with the rules regarding the Collage of Voices display; no individuals or groups of individuals may be targeted in negative ways.

Additionally, Watson Holton and Zeybekoglu ask that all secrets be true, anonymous, and preferably something never told to anyone before. They believe that by reading each other's secrets, the high school community will identify with and feel empathy for others, and also perhaps recognize secrets they are subconsciously concealing from themselves.

Blank 4x6 postcards can be found in the main office across from the auditorium. Finished postcards may be put into the wooden box underneath the Collage of Voices display case for submission.

Women's Conference Proves Uplifting for All Who Attended

By Deana LaFauci

Picturing a "women's conference" immediately conjures images of self-important women listening to and giving monotonous speeches. However, none of this proved to be true when I attended the Mass Conference for Women. The MCW was an uplifting, productive and fun event that combined the empowerment of women with a variety of fields.

This year, the annual conference was held at the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center and drew over six thousand attendees. Upon checking in, all attendees received tote bags filled with various promotional items, such as an iPod case, a Luna energy bar, and hand sanitizer. During the breakfast session, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Anna Quindlin and former CBS anchor Rene Syler started the day with uplifting speeches.

After breakfast, the day was divided up into more specific seminar sessions, allowing attendees to choose according to their interests. Over twenty-seven seminar sessions were offered focusing on a range of topics including health research, career development, fashion, networking, and communication. Seminar titles like "The Changing Face of Women's Health Research" and "The Entrepreneur's Toolkit" emphasized the conference's intent to bring feminism into the spheres of technology

and business.

For the first session of the day, I chose to attend a seminar about non-profit organizations run by women. Equipped with a complimentary Red Sox bracelet and a booklet outlining Red Sox charities, I listened to Boston Red Sox Senior Vice President Meg Vaillancourt speak about her extensive work as Executive Director of the non-profit Red Sox Foundation.

The Red Sox Foundation has donated twenty million dollars in the last five years to various non-profit organizations and hosts countless community service projects and fundraisers, such as "Sox for Socks." In this fundraiser, the Red Sox asked fans to bring new pairs of socks for those in need and over 40,000 pairs were collected. The women involved discussed the intricacies of non-profit work, including fundraising, public relations, recruitment of executives and the importance of non-profits working cooperatively as they compete for limited funds.

The second session I attended was called "The Hero Next Door" and featured speakers Bonnie St. John, a silver-medalist in downhill skiing at the 1984 Paralympics and Lindsay Hyde, a young woman who founded "Strong Women, Strong Girls," an educational program, as a freshman at Harvard.

The luncheon keynote session, arguably the selling point of the con-

ference, featured Jack Welch, the former CEO of General Electric and his wife Suzy (formerly of Lexington), who is contributing editor of O Magazine. Instead of merely delivering a speech, the Welch's were interviewed together. The Welch's presence contributed valuable insight into the world of business and philanthropy.

Later on, I checked out the exhibit hall, where organizations like The Boston Globe, Reebok, Dunkin Donuts, State Street, Continental Airlines and MAGIC 106.7 had set up booths, and spoke with an array of different people while picking up some free giveaways and brochures.

While I was at the conference, I noted the emphasis placed on younger women. Three seminar sessions called the "Young Women's Program" were created specifically for high school and college age attendees and focused on such topics as image, role models, and business. The conference serves as a popular field trip for many Boston area schools, and last year several LHS students attended.

If you are looking to secure an internship or a job, the MCW is a great place to start your search. Attendees had a window into the accomplishments of some of our nation's female leaders in business, education, entertainment, and philanthropy, and opportunities to speak with and learn from them.

Getting Involved Politically

By Lilia Kilburn

In contrast with the formal plaques commemorating famous political events that took place in Lexington, the hallmarks of current politics like lawn signs and bumper stickers can seem flimsy and impermanent. However, this year's presidential campaign, in which a multitude of important issues are at stake, just may be an event to go down in the books.

While for many LHS students, the 2004 contest is a hazy memory marked by phrases like "flip-flopper" and "Swift Boats," the current contest will be the first that many of us will follow and even vote in. True to form, students have involved themselves politically in a variety of ways, demonstrating that you do not need to wait until your 18th birthday to be political.

Student political organization JSA, or Junior Statesmen of America, traveled to a mock primary in New Hampshire the day before the New Hampshire primaries and met with representatives from many of the campaigns, including Rudy Giuliani's now-jobless campaign manager, former DNC Chairman Terry McCullough, and quirky Ohio congressman and candidate Dennis Ku-

cinich. Senior Deana LaFauci also took advantage of the buzz around New Hampshire, attending two rallies (see chart at left).

Closer to home, Senior Rachel Gants and Junior Mariliza Parker ran a voter registration drive in Commons I. Gants, an avid Clinton supporter, canvassed for her candidate several weekends in New Hampshire, and ultimately decided to remain in New Hampshire for the final four days before the primary.

Says Gants, "It was great to see the huge organization of the Clinton GOTV compared to other campaigns—something that was not focused on by pollsters...Clinton drivers and vans picked up unprecedented numbers of elderly and low-income voters who wouldn't otherwise have been able to get to the polls...There were lines out the door to canvass."

The enthusiasm of young people for Barack Obama has led to a record turnout of young voters in many contests. Obama won overwhelmingly in our library's Super Tuesday poll with 61% of the vote, compared to 19% for Clinton and 8% for McCain.

Several student Obama supporters braved the cold to attend his rally the night before Super Tuesday, in-

cluding Senior Nyle Usmani, who drove voters to the polls in New Hampshire on behalf of the Obama campaign, and Senior Brittany Grabel, who has canvassed with Senior Diana Kole for Obama.

Grabel, like many, cites messages found in Obama's soaring rhetoric as reasons for her support: "I'm campaigning for Obama because, like he said, this election is about the past versus the future. You could look backwards and say, that was better than this, let's go back to that. Or you could look forwards and reach for something even better. Obama has a remarkable ability to unite our incredibly polarized country and to excite young people like me about politics."

Whatever your affiliation, political involvement is eye-opening and rewarding, and this race promises to be a captivating one. There's a long way to go until November: McCain faces a difficult task in appealing to the entire Republican Party base, while Clinton and Obama may remain neck-in-neck until convention time. So, stay tuned to your favorite pundit, and cast a ballot if you can. If you're rueing your post-November birthday, like me, there are tons of other ways to participate in the political process.

A Closer Look at the NH Primaries:
The Clinton and Obama Rallies in Nashua
By Deana LaFauci

Barack Obama	The Candidate	Hillary Clinton
Sat. Jan 5 th	Date of Rally	Sun. Jan 6 th
Nashua North HS	Location	Nashua North HS
11:00 AM	Start Time	12:00 PM
7:30 AM	Arrival Time Necessary to be in Front of Line	9:00 AM
Speech	Type of Presentation	Short Speech, Q&A
Motown	Type of Music Played	Country and Soft Rock
3,500	Number of Attendees as Reported by Candidate	3,000
0	Number of American Flags Visible	2
1	Number of Babies Kissed	0
0	Delay in Start Time due to "Secret Service Sweep of Building"	45 Minutes
"Would you like to Volunteer?"	Most Common Comment from Campaign Workers	"Sorry about the delay. Thanks for coming out!"
Signs	Free Stuff	Signs and Stickers
1	Number of Altercations Between Staff Members and Bill O'Reilly	0

FEATURES

Swingin' Jazz Nite

By Abha Gallewale

On Friday, January 18, the auditorium was filled with lively music, as the Jazz students of LHS showcased their talent and music composition skills in Jazz Nite 2 (all of the music was student-composed). Quite a few students came to show their support to their peers and celebrate the end of the first semester.

The program began with the C Block Beginning Jazz Improvisation Class. The first song, Robert Rossi's "King of the Beach," was a great beginning to the evening. Mariah Lancaster's "Croonin' Blues" followed, and featured a lovely violin solo by Laura Yanushpolsky. In David Kim's "Blues Clues," Emma Chung played a flawless flute solo and proved that jazz music could be made up of more than the stereotypical saxophone, bass, and drums. However, Adam Kane, the composer of "Something Swing," proved that drums were vital to the core of a jazz song with his upbeat solo.

The E-Block Beginning Jazz Improvisation Class was next on the program. Helen Rich played wonderfully on the clarinet in Andrew Crocker's "Betty Style," and Omer Bartfeld's "Just for Fun" and Jeremy Weiser's "Slow Walkin'" were crowd-pleasers. However, the hit of the segment was Mark Goodwin's "Nice Tri," where Tim Parsons delivered an exciting performance showcasing his vocal versatility. Both Jazz classes are taught by Mr. Aramati.

The second half of the program featured Jazz Nite's two regular performing groups, the LHS Jazz Septet and Combo. Spencer Gurley-Green sounded splendid on guitar during Phil Rauscher's "Quezon," and Natty Durant's trombone solo was well-played during his composition, "Inconsiderate."

Closing Septet's performance was "Hey Blue," composed by pianist Steven Feifke. Mark Goodwin's wrists were flying as he played a drum solo without any accompaniment. Sophomore trumpet player Nick Singer muted his instrument, making the piece seem like an old-fashioned record.

Ending the program was the award-winning LHS Jazz Combo, comprising of seven of the best jazz students at LHS. Toby Forman's "Geary's Groove" was a fairly slow but steady tune that was able to capture the

audience's attention despite its long length. The bass kept the steady background tune consistent while the saxophones and trumpet players soloed. Ben Roberts played accompanying piano chords, unifying the piece. Toby's part on the alto saxophone was absolutely phenomenal, and the piece ended with a unique harmony.

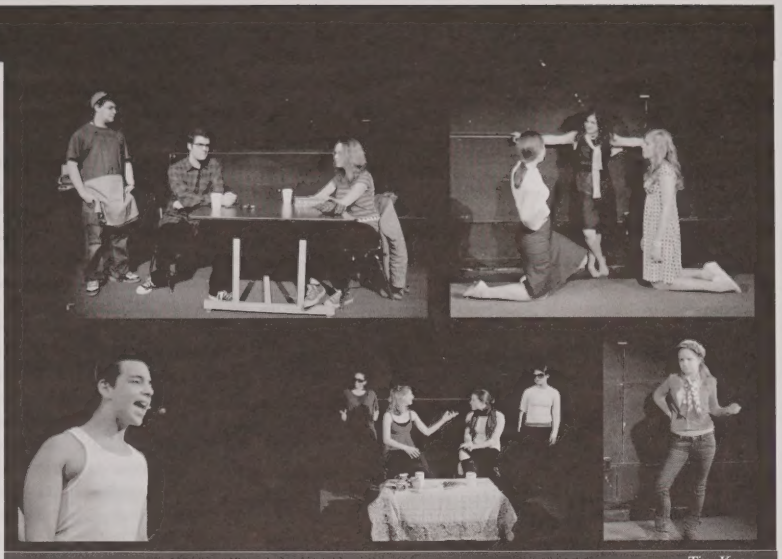
Next came "Never Before." Composer Raviv Markovitz played a thrilling solo on bass that was intense, leaving the audience amazed and speechless. At one point, the solo quieted down, giving the illusion that the solo was over, but it continued to become louder in volume. The audience was wildly applauding by the end. The piece itself was set to an average tempo, with a climax at the very end.

The next tune, Ben Roberts' "Vivar's Journey," first featured Toby Forman, whose alto saxophone solo became increasingly faster until it reached a mindblowing tempo. Nathan Katz's tenor saxophone solo gave the audience a feeling of mystery and became increasingly intriguing before slowly waning without a large climax.

At one point, the tune became soothing, making it seem as though Vivar had reached his destination. Excitement still awaited him, however, as the instrumentalists quickly began to play at a fortissimo volume and just as suddenly quieted to a soft dynamic. Nathan ended the piece, and his closing notes signified that Vivar had finally reached the end of his journey.

The last tune of Jazz Nite was "Synesthetic." Jon Davies sounded exceptional on guitar, as did Toby Forman's solo, which followed the same exciting theme. Ben Roberts' piano solo was a fitting finale with an exciting beat, accompanied by bass and drums. Raviv Markovitz's bass solo was amazing as usual and even faster this time, making the audience applaud wildly. Dan Garmon played a thrilling drum solo to end the piece, playing a "question-and-answer" game with the saxophones and trumpets. He would play a fast drum part, followed by a quick trumpet interruption and followed by more drums.

Jazz Nite was a raving success and a delight for all who attended. Freshman Liz Estey was "impressed with the level of musicality shown by all of the groups." Be sure to check out Jazz Nite 3 in April!



Tim Kenny

Winterfest showcased an incredible diversity of acting styles and topics, from serious to hilarious.

Winterfest Beats the Chill

By Sophie Isaak

Every year, during the lonely period between December and February break, the Drama Club puts on Winterfest. It seems that this completely student-run drama festival is exactly what is needed to beat the cold winter winds. Eleven unique acts span the nights of Thursday, January 31st to Saturday, February 2nd. With a different combination of acts each night, there is a definite advantage to buying a three-day pass.

Each night the show opens with a performance by Drama Club. Appropriately entitled Huh!, this sketch utilizes all members of the club to create a sort of drama-machine. This short, abstract performance sets the stage for a weekend of distinctive interpretations and creative dramatizations, concluding with the abstract Dresden Dolls piece. Winterfest allows students a forum to relay their messages, from familial conflicts to the misguided nature of the modern hipster. It is amazing to see your peers on stage doing something that you had no idea they were capable of.

Another constant of the production was the Improv Troupe. As Winterfest tradition dictates, Improv Troupe was divided into a good-natured and hilarious battle of the sexes. The culminating event was the skit "World's Worst...," where members have to think of examples of the world's worst something, with suggestions being called from the audience. The results are creative and surprising, with troupe members forced to think of possibilities for the "World's worst American Idol contestant" or "World's worst health teacher". However, Improv Troupe did not have a monopoly on audience laughter. Many other pieces were full of hilarious comedic techniques, ranging from deadpan to slapstick.

Some of the humorous pieces were Catch 22, Family Jewels, Forbidden Fruit, Overtones, and Honeymooners. Catch-22 is a dramatization of the trial of Clevinger, an excerpt from Joseph Heller's novel Catch-22.

Family Jewels, written and directed by David Entin, is a not entirely serious look at a family in crisis. James Swanson played a conniving father, while Grant Patch, John Davies, and Carla Yengo-Khan were equally entertaining as his children.

Written and directed by Rachel Iba, Forbidden Fruit was a multilayered comedy starring Jonathan Wan and Ben Smith. Overtones, adapted from a Victorian-era play, starred Rebecca Luberoff, Lily Barrett, Anna Luberoff, and Natalie Friedman as the internal and external personas of two women attempting to conceal their unhappiness from each other. Honeymooners, written by Cam MacNeil and starring MacNeil and Gabi Gocyszynska, detailed the absurd

adventures of a couple on honeymoon at a mysterious ski resort.

More serious pieces included The Boy Who Ate the Moon, A Farce on Post-Modern Existentialism for the Beginning Reader, and The Way I Say. The Boy Who Ate the Moon was written by Jane Martin and

directed by Sohini Pillai. Mariah Slone starred as a nurse helping James, played by Calvin Iverson, to overcome his ailment: the moon that he has accidentally consumed. Existentialism, written by and starring Grant Patch, was a moving satire of the foolishness and narcissism that plagues intellectualism. This play was enhanced by the performances of Lilia Kilburn as a hypocritical college student and Mark Goodwin as a bumbling barista. The Way I Say, directed by Meaghan Schneiderman, follows a teenage girl's pregnancy and conflict with her controlling boyfriend.

While Winterfest is over, dramatic performances at Lexington High School are far from it. Improv Troupe has an upcoming show before February vacation, and will continue to perform throughout the year. Faust, a play partially written by Mr. Bogart, will be put on in the spring. However, for those lucky enough to see it, Winterfest satiated the need for student-created entertainment, at least for the time being.



Lilia Kilburn

Jon Davies busts out a dynamic solo.



Editors-in-Chief	Rivka Barrett Lilia Kilburn
Technical Editors	Tim Kenny Kate Bailey Ally Dunn
News Editors	Mark Fusunyan Deana LaFauci
Features Editors	Abha Gallewale Sophie Isaak
Editorials Editors	Lily Barrett Noah Karr Kaitin
A&E Editors	Hannah Galin Mia Karnofsky
Sports Editors	Najeeb Hossain Simon Lehar
Photo Editor	Tim Kenny
Copy Editors	Sarah Phat Nyle Usmani
Business Editor	Shelly Yanushpolsky

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

Revel in Solstice Show

By Rivka Barrett

December 30th – it is the last performance of the Christmas Revels, held to honor the Winter Solstice. Sanders Theater is a smaller arena within Harvard's massive Memorial Hall. For three hours, we'll be watching singing and dancing from Bulgaria, Bosnia, Macedonia, Serbia, Croatia, and Slovenia.

The Mideast Folk Ensemble play trumpets and trombones as the lights dim. Children in colorful folk garb enter and begin opening with a beautiful rendition of "Hark the Herald Angels Sing." Audience members are encouraged to join in as well. Cast members in animal masks walk through the audience, ringing cow bells.

Shortly after, the cast enacts the Bulgarian myth Hubava Milka, in which a young girl sails away with a merchant who proposes to her. This myth is performed with humor and ingenuity.

Strawberries in Winter features an evil stepmother sending two children into the woods to fetch food, in the hopes that they will get lost. The story keeps the audience riveted.

The stage dims, and cast members dance onstage, outfitted in antlers. While singing the Rozdestvo Tvoje, a Serbian church hymn, the cast follows an old tradition of breaking a loaf of bread into pieces and handing it out to the audience.

The highlight of the show is the Mummings Play, featuring a variety of characters from Balkan myths.

The audience alternatively roars with laughter and falls silent during emotional moments.

This year, the Balkan folk ensemble Libana, consisting of seven women, is the featured act in the Christmas Revels. At the end of the show, snow falls onstage and drifts out into the audience, creating a perfect finale.

It may have come as a surprise to some in the audience to see a couple of our classmates onstage. Two LHS students, Sarah Hebert-Johnson ('09) and Evan Seitchik ('07) sang and danced as part of the cast.

Even the Assistant Stage Manager of Revels, Gillian Stewart ('06), is an LHS alumna. Her job involved setting up the stage before each show with props, lights, and set pieces, along with "taking care of any crises broken shoelaces, bloody noses, forgotten props – you name it."

Stewart revealed that the snow at the end of the show was "actually made with soap bubbles," and that the fantastic costumes worn by Revels actors were from a costume shop in Somerville called Costume Works, Inc. This is her fifth year working on tech crew.

When asked about what she enjoys most about her job, Stewart admits, "I love the pressure of working in theater ... if something doesn't work right – 1,200 people are going to see it." She adds, "Being on tech is great – you get to wear black and wear a fancy intercom headset and do whatever you want! It's a way to be part of a great community and a fabulous show."

Kite Runner Onscreen

By Mia Karnofsky

Walking out of the theatre after seeing the best-seller-turned-major motion picture *The Kite Runner*, an audience member, who apparently had not read the book, commented, "What a great story." Which is exactly the height of the film's merit. Adapted from Khaled Hosseini's 2003 novel, the film is a tale of guilt-driven redemption.

Non-professional Afghan children play young Amir and Hassan, and the rest of the cast is not very well known, including Khalid Abdalla and Atossa Leoni. Amir, an Afghan expatriate in America, looks back on a momentous point in his childhood. Amir participated in the kite-fighting tradition in Kabul with Hassan, a loyal friend and Hazari servant to Amir and his wealthy father. On the same fateful day that they won the winter kite tournament, a brutal older boy violated Hassan.

Those familiar with the novel recognize the shame Amir feels

from keeping Hassan's secret from his distant father. A phone call from an aging friend, who says, "There is a way to be good again," brings Amir back to a distraught, war-torn Afghanistan. Amir re-encounters the same childhood nemesis who tortured Hassan, and is finally able to bring Hassan's orphaned son home with him.



Director Marc Forster doesn't particularly attempt to paint a larger portrait of the country, and the film leans on the aspect of personal conflict, without showing the tension between the coun-

try and its oppressors. The film doesn't include much of the history that makes the novel so compelling. It would be a daunting feat to compress the disarray of history that the novel contains into such a movie, especially while trying to stay true to the book.

Consequently, the story is brilliantly sweet and genuine, but it lacks the meaningful quality of the novel.

Countdown 2007's Top Five Albums

By Genesis Lung

This year has seen the release of music and a whole slew of opinions about which was best. Beauty is subjective, but, the masses of fans and the critical buzz about some albums say it all. In 2007 there were some clear winners.

In respectable fifth is *Graduation* by Kanye West. The hip hop artist collaborated with far out guests such as Daft Punk who inserted dramatic changes in technique. The appeal for his music is still the same; it is centered on connecting with the sentiments of his audience. The time West spent with Jay-Z as his tutor is clearly illuminated here in his rap lines- his performance exudes attitude with a purpose. *Graduation* topped the sales charts with 957,000 CDs sold.

Just inching ahead in fourth place is *Magic* by Bruce Springsteen. This

rock genre album was recorded with innovative spliced piano and saxophone backgrounds, which was an impressive feat from a band whose members were unable to physically meet for sessions. Springsteen personally wrote all twelve songs. While *Magic* is more laid back than West's ambitious work, there is a degree of subliminal mastery exhibited in the finer details of *Magic*.

Clad in the bronze was *As I Am* by Alicia Keys, climbing quickly up statistics internationally. Even in Taiwan, *As I Am* was voted the second best album. The R&B and soul artist has clutched both fame and a world record as one of the two female singers to ever top the charts for four consecutive albums. The other was Britney Spears. Sentimentality is clearly expressed in mid tempo and inspiring melodies. The numbers speak for themselves- the album sold

a whopping 1,349,200 copies.

The silver surfer, *Minutes to Midnight* by Linkin Park, contained the year's greatest single release, *What I've Done*. In this album, Linkin Park riskily veered away from the traditional metal regime. The sp ladderdash of alternative rock, rap and punk has paid off. A wide range of viewpoints are displayed on the theme of redemption. Vocals are well harmonized, bringing to mind past successes such as *Somewhere I Belong*.

But undeniably the best in every aspect was *In Rainbows* by Radiohead, which was released in opposition to the modern marketing system that suppresses the progress of music by promoting teenybopper artists. The alternative rock is amazing. There is no need for further review. Googling "In Rainbows" brings up hundreds of fanatic reviews.



The Harvard-Radcliffe Gilbert and Sullivan Players performing in "The Mikado."

Harvard Production of Mikado Amuses and Confuses

By Hannah Galin

On a Saturday night in December, I went to see the Harvard-Radcliffe Gilbert & Sullivan Players production of "The Mikado." Performed at the very small Agassiz Theatre on the Harvard campus, there were only about a hundred audience members. Rather than playing in a pit, the orchestra played on the same level as the audience. So the audience in the front row was looking directly at the musicians; they could really hear those drums!

When the conductor came in, he asked everyone to rise, and in the honor and spirit of Gilbert and Sullivan, we were told to sing the national anthem of the United Kingdom. Standing up and hearing the rest of the audience belt lyrics about saving the Queen, I felt rather amused. This was certainly going to be an interesting night.

"The Mikado" takes place in Japan. It is the funny love story of Yum-Yum and Nanki-Poo. Yum-Yum is engaged to Ko-Ko, who is the Lord High Executioner. The Mikado, or the ruler of the land, has required that an execution take place, but the only living person who was ever on death row was Ko-Ko, and he doesn't want to kill himself. Ko-Ko and Nanki-Poo work out a crazy deal whereby Nanki-Poo gets to marry Yum-Yum for one month before he takes Ko-Ko's place at the scaffold.

The plot gets very complicated when it turns out that Nanki-Poo is the son of the Mikado, who drops in on the town right after Ko-Ko has signed Nanki-Poo's death certificate. Other main characters include Pooh-Bah, the Lord High Everything Else, and Katisha, Nanki-Poo's fiancé. Adam Goldenberg, who played

Pooh-Bah, stimulated a lot of laughter because of his comic height. Standing next to everyone else on stage, he looked like Robert Barone, played by Brad Garrett, on the old show *Everybody Loves Raymond*.

Brian Polk, who played Ko-Ko had a hilarious speech at the end of the show, where he is supposed to be confessing his love to a woman who terrifies him. Polk must have adlibbed some extra lines into his performance because all of the orchestra members turned around to watch him and silently laugh.

Despite the amazing voices, this show is a bit hard to understand. Many of the songs require intense enunciation, and coupled with the speed at which the actors and actresses sing and talk, it is hard to catch all of the jokes. But as a whole, "The Mikado" is a truly enjoyable and hilarious production.

EDITORIALS

Assessing Dr. Jones' Tenure

By Noah Karr-Kaitin

Dr. Michael Jones is leaving LHS with what can best be seen as a mixed record. Though few would argue that he did not care about our school, some students have been less than supportive of his style of decision making.

Many students have expressed a fair number of specific grievances about Jones' tenure at LHS, stemming from one problem - Jones' seeming disregard for student input on pertinent issues. In the cases of the prom bus policy, events policy, singing valentines, and the alternative publication "Whatever the #^@ You Want," the student body has felt that the administration acted with a heavy hand. Certainly not every student has been upset over losing his or her ability to attend a large number of events or ride a limo to a prom, but many did take offense at the perceived disrespect Dr. Jones showed the student body by refusing to consult them on any of these issues.

When newly designed policies were not clearly introduced to students, we were often forced to hear about them solely through the grapevine. The Senate, a forum in which these policies could have been discussed and arguably the administration's most direct liaison with the student body, was misused during Dr. Jones' tenure.

Often ridiculed for its ineffectiveness, the Senate has been regularly

thwarted by the administration. While Dr. Jones is not solely responsible for this, his actions have had a chilling effect on the body's behavior. Last year, Jones appeared before the Senate and asked its members to stand with him in selling the prom bus idea. Though the administration spent months lining up support for the policy from high school parents and a whole host of groups within the town of Lexington, neither the Senate nor any other student group was notified before the decision was made. The message was that the Senate would only be brought on board at the eleventh hour and only if they were willing to support an administrative decision.

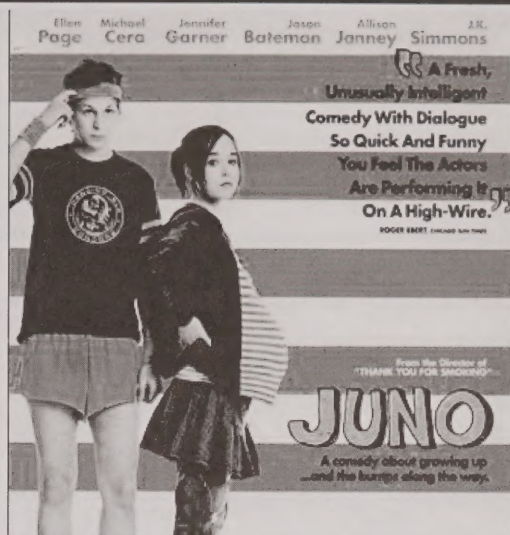
While it is not hard to find students who agree with prom busing or the new events policy, it is impossible to find a student who wanted to see the old Valentine a capella costumes taken away. For the administration to cite nameless complaints as to the singers' so-called indecency, came across as somewhat puritanical in this day and age.

The administration's response to the alternative publication "Whatever the #^@ You Want" challenged free expression on a more serious level. For those who do not know, "Whatever the #^@ You Want" was a publication put out by a group of students who published anonymous, often provocative, submissions. At the end of the last school

year, the administration outlawed "Whatever" by threatening those distributing it with severe punishments. The publication did show creativity and imagination, and celebrated the written word in its own way--all qualities valued in the LHS mission statement. In a manner that can be described as the standard response to "unapproved creativity," the administration imposed unreasonable restrictions on this student expression.

The LHS mission statement calls for students to be "engaged." But where is the engagement when the principal does not even have the courtesy to consult with the various interested student groups before reaching decisions? After all, it is the students who were most directly affected by such decisions as the prom bus policy. Perhaps in the end the students would have supported the administration's plan if they had been part of the process from the beginning.

Dr. Jones continually acted for the student body, taking the role of the responsible adult and assuming that we did not want to play any role in running our school. He sent the message that our input has been, for the most part, unnecessary or perhaps even obstructive. To an involved student body like ours, this was a grave offense. Let's hope the next LHS principal will be more respectful of student opinions.



Teen pregnancy finds its pop cultural niche in movies like Juno.

Blame Jamie Lynn's Pregnancy on Abstinence Only Education

By Emily Dodson

When sixteen-year-old Jamie Lynn Spears shocked the nation on December 19th with news that she had become pregnant by her boyfriend, reactions were nearly uniformly negative. The star of Nickelodeon's hit-show, "Zoey-101," had long been considered the good girl of the Spears family, with her sister's antics dominating tabloid media in 2007.

Now, as the younger Spears takes Britney's place in the spotlight, many ask if the pregnancy is entirely her fault. The United States' weak sex-ed programs, combined with sexually explicit material in the media, may have led Jamie Lynn to the same fate faced by a large number of American teenagers.

According to author Miriam Grossman, "No one should be surprised. This incident with Jamie Lynn should be looked at as a logical consequence of the type of education and guidance that we give to young people these days -- that sexuality is part of their lives at any age."

After a fourteen-year decline in teenage pregnancy rates in the United States, statistics show a sudden increase. According to a report issued by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the number of teens giving birth in the U.S. rose in 2006, with the most significant growth occurring within the 15-19 age group.

Dianne Luby of the Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts says these statistics show that the Bush Administration's focus on teaching "abstinence only before marriage" is insufficient, and that the Commonwealth of Massachusetts should seek other ways to "promote abstinence without discouraging condom use." But many educators fear that making condoms available in schools will give kids "the wrong idea."

In light of established reluctance to back educational programs that include birth control, the US is left with the highest teen pregnancy rate among developed nations. Around one million American teens - more than half aged 17 and under -- become pregnant each year. One third of these young women keep their babies.

Many critics, including Wendy Wright of Concerned Women for America, blame the entertainment and media industries for glamorizing sex and pregnancy, as well as failing to portray the full costs of sexual activity. "Too often, sex is presented as having no consequences," Wright says.

A 2007 Kaiser Family Foundation study entitled "Parent, Children, and Media" reports parental concern over inappropriate sexual content in the media, particularly in television. 85% of the surveyed parents claimed to believe that exposure to such material presses children to become sexually active before they are ready.

The pregnant Jamie Lynn, who contrasts greatly with her wholesome TV image, is a victim of our unsuccessful sexual education programs and a product of our media generation. Should our society adapt a pro-life viewpoint to discourage teenagers from having sex?

A pro-life society may indeed discourage teenagers from having sex in fear of having to raise a baby, but in the end, sexual activity depends on individual personality factors, family, peers, religion, etc. Everyone is different. Also, a pro-life society may encourage teenagers to abandon their babies or send them to substandard orphanages. When it comes to teen pregnancies, or any pregnancies, the childbearing should be able to choose what they do with their baby.

The Problem With "P.C."

By Genesis Lung

American culture, which most people proudly describe as diverse and open, is both more and less than what it seems. Historically, America has been termed a melting pot, but our government has often disregarded the welfare of immigrants and discredited ideas outside of the mainstream. While freedom of speech is protected by the Constitution, the diffusion of ideas can still be stifled. In past years, content presented in media and speech has been flagged as inappropriate regardless of its iconic value or ties to American pride. Political correctness is a concept that challenges the nature of our conglomerate society.

In 2005, the Sesame Workshop division decided to alter the classic Cookie Monster character, switching out cookies for vegetables and fruit in his virtual diet. The transformation was approved on the basis that it was unethical to encourage unhealthy eating habits in children. Yet this act is narrow-minded. Over generations, the same character has inspired countless children and brought about more good than bad in their development. The wholesome idea of the Cookie Monster is perverted by censorship wearing the mask of "political correctness."

Other effects of political correctness are not as innocuous as chang-



Cookie Monster's nutritional but socially unhealthy new image.

ing a cartoon. The 2003 epiphany by two Republican leaders in the House of Representatives to change "French fries" to "Freedom fries" spread anti-French sentiments like wildfire throughout the country. The episode was a culmination of protest against French officials who had removed support from the Iraq invasion. Boycotts led to a decline in revenue for overseas French businesses.

While the old term for French fries was reinstated, the ferocity of the response must be noted. After all, there are eight million French Americans living in the United States. The country should not be divided against itself.

America is said to uphold freedom of speech and freedom of press - but even the labels on a fast food menu are literature, and even a television character must be permitted to speak freely!

The ideology of political correctness is not used, as it is widely purported, to prevent suppression of any one ethnicity or group. It kills any literature that is not "American," at the same time failing to see that America is defined as a collection of different cultures and ethnicities. To remain proud of our super culture, we must coexist without abridging the rights of individuals to express preferences - even Cookie Monster's.

SPORTS

No Crown for Basketball Team

By Najeeb Hossain

It is an unusual season for the boys basketball team when they aren't wrapping up the Middlesex League championship at this point in the season. Coming off last year's remarkable undefeated regular season it was understandable that Coach Bob Farias was ready for a bit of a letdown. What the team did not bargain for was that rival Watertown would not only whip the locals in an early season contest but would also nip the Minutemen 59-58 on a winning shot with just 3 seconds left in a recent game.

As of this writing the Minutemen have now dropped four contests. One to an out-of-state rival in the

Christmas holiday tournament, the two losses to Watertown and an unexpected defeat at the hands of Woburn. The Woburn game bore extra significance since their coach, Tom Sullivan, was an all-state guard for Lexington during his high school playing days as well as an assistant to Farias for many years. The closely fought game ended when the Tanners went on a late run to outshoot the locals by a score of 61-53.

That game left the team with an admittedly "sour taste" in their mouths but that was soon turned sweet with an inspiring 89-57 drubbing of Wakefield. So far this season the team has shown a balanced scoring attack led by Danny O'Keefe, David Miller,

Scott Tavares, and Lance Greene. Miller and Greene have provided most of the long distance firepower while O'Keefe has been the inside force. The boys will get another shot at Watertown before both teams hit the post-season tournament. Since Watertown is the Division 3 defending state champs, losing to them was no cause for shame, especially since this year's Minuteman squad is still very young, with most of its key performers still underclassmen. Once Lexington enters the tournament it will carry high hopes but less of the pressure last year's team had to bear. Most important, they will no longer have to worry about the scrappy Watertown, which is in Division Three.



Courtesy of Team Website

John Moscatel checks his Waltham Hawk opponent in an early season non-league game. Currently the team's record stands at 6-8-1 and it looks like the boys will miss the post-season tournament after qualifying last season for the first time in several years. This is particularly disappointing since the Lexington icemen started the season with high hopes and a string of early victories.

Sports Briefs

By E-Jay Kao

Swimming

The boys swimming team continued its winning ways with two recent victories over Winchester (85-77) and Central Catholic (89-71). The close scores, however, do not indicate how much the Minutemen dominated their opponents in each of these meets. With just three more dual competitions left it looks as if Lexington will be able to continue its hold on the top spot in the Middlesex League. The squad was led by Michael Woodbury in the sprints and the relays and Michael Lin in the backstroke. Other key performers were turned in by David Wang in the individual medley and Taylor Patch in the distance freestyle events.

Wrestling

The wrestling team is about to finish one of its most successful dual meets seasons in years. Despite falling somewhat short of last year's twenty win record, this year's team wrestled a much tougher schedule

and ran into some very strong league competition. The boys overall record stands at 16-12 as of this writing, with a notable 4th place finish in the annual Belmont Tournament.

Most impressive for the team have been the performances of Captains Grant Forestall, Marq Bittarelli and Jorge Hernandez. Juniors Joey DeCarlo and Derek Campbell have racked up some important points for the team with a number of crucial pins. The wrestlers are looking forward to the post-season sectional tournament and dual meet championships rounds where they hope to advance onto state level competition.

Girls Hockey

The highly rated Lexington girls hockey team is still hoping to finish its season atop the Middlesex League as they enter the final weeks of the season. The girls have been one of the top rated teams in Boston Globe polls throughout the season, but suffered a crushing 3-1 loss recently to

Needham on the heels of a surprising 1-1 tie against league rival Woburn. The offensive attack has been led by Sammy Woodward, Kyleigh Williams, Meghan McNabb, and Bridget Everett. Meanwhile Nina Riley has been immensely important in goal for the ice squad all season.

Indoor Track

The girls track team has lost only one meet so far this winter, a 51-35 defeat at the hands of arch rival Reading. Nevertheless, a number of runners have already qualified for post-season competition including Anne Sheridan, Naomi Campbell, Erika Chan, Allison Sowsy, Martha Zimmerman and Menemsha MacBain. The girls 4x400 relay team will also be seen in sectional and statewide competition.

On the boys' side, despite an unusual three losses this season such stars as Dyyan Adler-Belendez, Dan Smoot and Daishawn Beaumont have shined in their respective events.



Courtesy of Team Website

Heavyweight wrestler Jorge Hernandez is about to turn his Arlington opponent into a pin in a match Lexington won, 38-30.

Girls Basketball Rebounds

By Mike Kent

The Lexington Girls Basketball team came into this year billed as a team that could compete for the Middlesex League title. Although the girls will come up short, there is no quit in them as seen by the way they have played the last two games, A 55-42 win over Wakefield and a 53-39 victory over Woburn have shown that they can compete with any team in the league.

Things did not look so hopeful after Lexington lost their first two games of the season. They lost their season opener in Melrose 36-32 and their fortunes weren't much better at home where they were beat by Belmont by 3 points. But Lexington rebounded nicely with a 22 point win over Woburn.

Lexington dominated Woburn in their first meeting allowing the Tanners only 3 points in the second quarter, Micaela Cyr was all over the court getting 5 steals; she also led a balanced offensive attack with 16 points. Alyssa Zahka chipped in with 12 points and Stacey Linehan

had 10 and grabbed rebound after rebound. In the game against Wakefield, Captain Nena Ugwuomo led the Minutemen with a game high 25 points. Cyr, Amanda McKenna, Zahka, and senior Jacqui Easton played great games offensively and defensively.

Lexington's record is currently 9-4 and they have started to come together and play with each successive game, especially at the defensive end. In their recent game against Burlington, they held the Burlington offense to under 10 points in every single quarter and against Watertown, they limited them to just three points in the fourth quarter.

Although Lexington may be out of the Middlesex League race they will go into the post-season tournament, assuming they qualify, as a very hot team. Prior to the recent victories over Wakefield and Woburn the girls had dropped two tough games to league powers Melrose and Belmont. Their recent rebound from those losses has been very encouraging to coach Paul McManus.

Athletes Win Awards

A large number of Lexington High athletes garnered all-Scholastic recognition from the Boston Globe for their performances during the 2007 fall sports season. Selected to the All-Scholastic first team in girls swimming was Amy O'Brien for her state best performance in the 500 freestyle. This was O'Brien's third selection by the Globe. Joining O'Brien on the first team was Dhyana Adler-Belendez for boys cross country.

Receiving All-Middlesex League honors in football were Jack Barons, Dan Popiel, Joe Servi, Gerry Huang, Andy Blackett and J.J. Wentzell. Named all league in girls' field hockey were Andrea Athens, Emily Fenn, Val Gilbert and Sarah Heintz. LHS boys recognized for their performance in golf were Lee Smith and Greg Johnson.

A number of Lexington athletes were selected from the boys soccer, which finished its season ranked 3rd in the state. Those selected all-league were Zach Abdu-Glass, Diego Garcia, Mike Hibberd, and Brendan

Margaaran. Girls soccer players so honored were Micaela Cyr, Jacqui Easton and Samantha Woodward.

Girls' volleyballers receiving all-league recognition were Stephanie Bond and Molly Eisenberg. Joining Adler-Belendez on the boys cross country all-league squad were Lexingtonians Andrew Dunn and Steven Leung. Girls cross country performers cited were Shereen Salem, Anna Sheridan, Menemsha MacBain, Naomi Campbell and Victoria Jones. Other swimmers honored besides O'Brien were Grace Bachman, Scarlet Hao and Nina Liu.

In addition to the number of athletes receiving awards, the Lexington High Schools sports program was also selected as the 3rd highest qualifier for the annual Dalton Trophy. The Dalton is presented to the Division One school with the highest winning percentage for all of its sports teams over the previous year. Lexington sports teams amassed a 71.9 winning percentage, tallying winner Lincoln-Sudbury by a bit.